

# NATIONAL HONEY REPORT



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Agricultural Marketing Service  
Fruit and Vegetable Programs  
Market News Branch

Website: [www.ams.usda.gov/marketnews.htm](http://www.ams.usda.gov/marketnews.htm)

Issued Monthly

2202 Monterey St. Suite 104-F  
Fresno, CA 93721  
Phone: 559-487-5178 FAX: 559-487-5199  
Federal Market News Service  
21 North 1<sup>st</sup> Ave., Suite 224  
Yakima, WA 98902  
Phone: 509-575-2494 FAX: 509-457-7132

---

Number 3

For subscription information, please call 1-800-487-8796

April 5, 2002

---

## HONEY MARKET FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH, 2002

IN VOLUMES OF 10,000 POUNDS OR GREATER UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED

Prices paid to beekeepers for extracted, unprocessed honey in major producing states by packers, handlers & other large users, cents per pound, f.o.b. or delivered nearby, containers exchanged or returned, prompt delivery & payment unless otherwise stated.

ARKANSAS	- Soybean, light amber, 63¢
COLORADO	- Alfalfa, extra light amber, 68¢
FLORIDA	- Orange, extra light amber, 75¢
	- Saw Palmetto, extra light amber, 72¢
NEW CROP...	- Orange, white, 80 - 85¢
MONTANA	- Clover, white, 74 - 75¢
NORTH DAKOTA	- Alfalfa, white, 77¢
	- Alfalfa, extra light amber, 72¢
SOUTH DAKOTA	- Clover, white, 72¢
TEXAS	- Clover, white, 76¢
UTAH	- Clover, white, 76¢
WASHINGTON	- Mint, dark amber, 57¢
WISCONSIN	- Buckwheat, dark amber, 75¢
	- Clover, white, 73 - 74¢

Prices paid to Canadian beekeepers for unprocessed bulk honey by packers & importers in U.S. currency, f.o.b. shipping point, containers included unless otherwise stated. Duty & crossing charges extra. Cents per pound.

Province & floral source not reported, white, 95¢

Prices paid to importers for bulk honey, duty paid, containers included, cents per pound ex-dock or point of entry unless otherwise stated.

EAST COAST.....	MEXICO	- Mixed Flowers, light amber, 72 1/4¢
	URUGUAY	- Mixed Flowers, extra light amber, 86 - 87¢
	URUGUAY	- Mixed Flowers, light amber, 87¢
GULF COAST.....	CHILE	- Mixed Flowers, white, 89¢
WEST COAST.....	CHINA	- Mixed Flowers, light amber, 67¢



## COLONY, HONEY PLANT & MARKET CONDITIONS DURING MARCH

### APPALACHIAN DISTRICT – (MD, PA, VA, WV) . . .

March continued the roller coaster weather pattern that was seen in February with above normal days followed by more normal cooler days. The only prominent difference between the months was the rainfall which occurred in March. Although the total precipitation was slightly above the average monthly level, more is needed to alleviate drought conditions. In some areas water restrictions and conservation measures continue. Bee activity has definitely increased with the onset of warmer days and generally bees are in very good shape. There was an occasional report of colony losses attributed to several environmental factors such as weather, starvation, mites and disease. Swarming has been reported in the strong colonies. Maples are done blooming and bees are foraging on various woodland trees such as willow and atamala. Major flows are just getting started in the southern part of the District. In mid-March a hard freeze fell on the area with temperatures in the high teens to low twenty's. This hurt many of the apricot and plum trees in bloom, plus early peaches in the southern part of the district. Northern peaches were just showing scattered pink and only occasional buds were hit. Magnolias were the most notably hit.

### CALIFORNIA . . .

A series of Pacific storms moved in and out of the state the first ten days of March, bringing some precipitation to all areas. Clear, cold conditions followed the storms setting daily-record lows in the central valleys. Redding dipped to 28 degrees and Sacraments recorded 31 degrees on the 8<sup>th</sup>. Bakersfield closed the week with record lows of 33 and 34 degrees. Daily-record lows continued to be reported and in some areas, temperatures dropped below freezing. Snow fell in the mountains but little precipitation was reported in the valleys. Finally, around the 24<sup>th</sup>, a high pressure system brought above normal temperatures to the northern two-thirds of the state. Red Bluff set records on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> when they reached 86 and 88 degrees.

The bees came out of the almonds in excellent condition as the weather was ideal for the bees to work. The cool weather most of March also helped sustain the bloom the then the warm temperatures the very end of the month brought out all varieties at once. Most bees were being moved into apricot, cherry and plum orchards and early varieties of oranges. Others were still sitting in holding yards but were able to work some manzanita, fiddleneck and fillaree near the mountains.

Not much of a sage or buckwheat crop is expected because of the dry conditions. Seed alfalfa acreage has also fallen off drastically as there is too much carry-over from previous crops and there is limited amounts of water for irrigation. In some dry areas, beekeepers are worried because food sources have not developed.

Queen breeders and package producers were busy getting orders out and report sales have been good. On the other hand, beekeeping supply businesses report their sales are slow and the only wax they are taking in is to trade for wax foundation.

### COLORADO . . .

Colorado weather has remained relatively dry throughout most of the state. There have been some scattered snow showers ( primarily in the northern mountains), but about two-thirds of the state remains in severe drought conditions. Most areas of the state remain at 50% or less of normal moisture contents at this time. Temperatures remained below normal for most of the month, consequently additional feeding was required for the colonies kept in the state. Migratory colonies are still working on pollination of the blooming orchards.

**IDAHO . . .**

Most migratory hives have been brought back to Idaho. Most beekeepers say that their bees returned in very good condition. Some hives will be rebuilt and re-queened and then leave again for the Washington area for apple pollination the which will start the first part of April in some areas.

Wholesale sales have been stronger, while retail sales have been slow.

Idaho honey production in 2001 totaled 4.6 million pounds, down 2% from 2000. Producer honey stocks were 1.6 million pounds on December 15, 2001, down 40% from a year earlier. Prices from the 2001 crop averaged 66 cents per pound, up 22% from 52 cents in 2000. (Source: National Agriculture Statistics Service - February 28, 2002). Honey producers voted in a February referendum to continue the Honey Research, Promotion, and Consumer Information Order. (Agriculture Marketing Service News Release March 18, 2002)

**ILLINOIS . . .**

The month of March was milder than normal over most of the state. Precipitation was so heavy in southern sections, rivers went over their banks. Southern sections set a record on the 4<sup>th</sup> when they recorded a low of 7 degrees. The 8<sup>th</sup> of the month a high of 74 degrees was reported in southeastern section. The weather then began to moderate with some high temperatures in the fifties & sixties over most of the state. In the central and southern sections, honeybees had numerous cleansing flights and collected pollen from daffodils, crocus and hyacinth. The maple and magnolia are expected to bud in the central section by the first of April. Beekeepers in the eastern and southeastern section expected strong swarming over spring.

Retail honey sales continued to be good while bulk movement of honey and wax was reported slow.

**INDIANA . . .**

The main activities of beekeepers was removing winter treatment strips and preparing their hives for moving out of over wintering yards. Some beekeepers reported bees had swarmed this early spring. The State Apiary Inspection Office received calls of swarming. Colonies were reported strong as the mild winter kept bees healthy. Some local clubs and association had beekeepers collecting package bees and queens due to the U.S. Postal and Federal Express unwillingness to deliver bees.

Beekeepers were expecting heavy brood as colonies were strong. Loss estimates were expected to be lighter than in past years

Honeybees have been working hyacinth, wild violet, crocus and lilac. Some honeybees had begun working magnolia and maple bloom in a few areas in southern Indiana.

Beekeepers had very little carryover stores of honey as local sales were very good. Bulk sales still continued to be slow.

**MISSISSIPPI . . .**

Colonies around the state were in fair to good condition. The spring buildup and development progressed well during the second half of March. The overall vegetation is about two weeks behind traditional schedules. During the second half of March, bees were able to work abundant pollen and nectar sources. Colonies were able to brood up rapidly. Swarming was taking place in the strongest of colonies and beekeepers were trying to stay ahead of this activity by installing new starter hives. The spring honey flow is underway in south Mississippi. Many colonies near the Gulf were working a good honey flow off titi during the latter part of the month. This flow has produced surplus honey at several locations. The flow was winding down in early April but was supplemented by the willow flow. Colonies in the northern portions of the state were just beginning to work off miscellaneous nectar sources at the end of March. These sources included dandelion and willows. Floral sources expected to produce honey in the state during April include black gum, clover, gallberry, rattan vine, tulip poplar, and yaupon holly.

**MISSOURI & IOWA . . .**

Weather during March has been below normal temperature with average rainfall. Colonies are good both in Missouri and Iowa. In Missouri the colonies are large. In Iowa they are medium. The sizes in the two states vary due to the different weather temperatures. There is a great amount of pollen in Missouri because of the bloom of flowers. In Iowa there are only a small amount due to the cold temperature. There is only little to no nectar in both states due to the cold temperatures. The bees are in good shape in both states in spite of the cold weather in both states. There seems to be a stronger demand for honey due to the small amount on the market. Finally, the season on the outlook seems to be a strong season for the bees with little loss of bees over this past winter.

**MONTANA . . .**

Some precipitation fell across the state during March with the southeast part of the state getting over an inch but most locations are only received 1/2". Subsoil moisture is rated 52% very short and 35% short. Every indication points to another possible drought so the state has created a Montana Drought Monitoring 2002 website. It provides information on current drought conditions and management.

On the 8<sup>th</sup>, Cut Bank's low of minus 34 degrees brought a 70-year-old record. The cold weather continued and on the 21<sup>st</sup>, minus 2- degrees in Miles City also brought a record while Cut Bank was still minus 27 degrees and Havre was minus 21 degrees/ Great Falls registered 12 days with low temperatures below 0, breaking a record set in 1912.

**NORTH CAROLINA . . .**

With mild weather and the rainfall that was received during the month of March, North Carolina has moved into the Spring season. Apples are beginning to bloom in the western part of the State, and blueberries in the eastern part. Hopefully, the state will not get the late freeze that was experienced last year. The state apiarist has stated that agriculture does depend on apiculture - bees are an essential part of agriculture. The bee colonies have come through the winter in generally good condition.

According to the state apiarist, there are between 120,000 and 160,000 bee colonies in the state and the numbers are increasing. One of the first outreach programs has been started, with the goal of getting more local residents to take up beekeeping.

**OREGON . . .**

Widespread precipitation fell across the state with some areas reporting over an inch on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Near Pendleton, their monthly total was 5.42" or 279% of normal. The last half of March, temperatures warmed up and rain was below normal. The most noticeable change from normal was along the coast and in the Willamette Valley where weekly totals ranged from, 78" to 1.82" below normal. Daytime highs were mostly in the 60's but the South-Central and northeast did record nighttime lows below freezing.

Winter losses are being reported, possibly from mites. Some varieties of ornamental trees are blooming a little later than normal. Vine and big-leaf maples were also starting to bloom. Vine and big-leaf maples were also starting to bloom. Migratory beekeepers brought their hives back from pollinating almonds in California the middle of the month. Even though they came back in good condition, some beekeepers were adding a little feed while they are still sitting in holding yards close to home. By the end of March, hives were being moved into the cherry orchards along the Columbia River and into blueberries and cherries in the Willamette Valley. Some producers are waiting for their new queens to arrive while others put them in while they were in California brought high winds to the central coast with gusts up to 70 mph while the Willamette Valley also had gusts of 60 mph which knocked out power to thousands of homes. Snow also fell in Salem.

The bees in California for the almond pollination are reported to be in good condition even though cluster sizes were a little down. The bees were able to leave their hives on most days and were bringing in significant amounts of pollen. The length of the almond bloom ended up about normal but most varieties are blooming all at once.

**UTAH...**

Most hives are still in California. Wholesale sales have been stronger, while retail sales have been slow. Utah honey production in 2001 totaled 874 thousand pounds, down 12% from 2000. Producer honey stocks were 315 thousand pounds on December 15, 2001, down 32% from a year earlier. Prices from the 2001 crop averaged 65 cents per pound, up 8% from 60 cents in 2000. (National Agriculture Statistics Service - Feb. 28, 2002). Honey producers voted in a February referendum to continue the Honey Research, Promotion, and Consumer Information Order. (Agriculture Marketing Service News Release March 18, 2002)

**WASHINGTON...**

The west-side of the state continued to receive significant rainfall with some areas accumulating a season total of over 100% of normal. Meanwhile, Eastern Washington saw little rainfall except in Pullman, which set a daily record on the 24<sup>th</sup> when they received nearly an inch. The wind also blew frequently. On the first day of Spring, heavy snow in the Cascades caused the mountain passes to be closed, in some cases because of avalanches. 13" of snow fell on the 19<sup>th</sup>, 20" on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 24" on the 21<sup>st</sup>. So far this winter, Snoqualmie Pass has gotten more than 450" of snow. The Yakima Valley is projected to have a full supply of irrigation water this summer. Precipitation has been above normal every month except February, when cold and dry weather saw a dig to just 62% of normal. Last year through February, rain and snow was just 49% of average. Most of the major irrigation districts were expected to turn on the water April 1<sup>st</sup>.

The cool March weather in Western Washington kept the bees in their hives and the queens quit lying because no pollen was coming in.

Migratory beekeepers in Central and Eastern Washington brought their bees back to the state in excellent condition. New queens were added, sometimes in California and some after fruit pollination. Beekeepers were busy moving hives into the cherry and apricot orchards where the bloom was about average.

**WISCONSIN...**

Temperatures for the month of March averaged above normal. Precipitation for the month was fairly heavy over most parts of the state. Beekeepers finished spring treatment for mites and most bees were strong heading into spring. The State Apiary Inspection Office reported beekeepers have estimated over wintering kill to be lower than previous years do to a mild winter. Cleansing flights were restricted due to cold temperatures and high winds.

Final figures for the year 2001; honey production totaled 5.43 million pounds, down from the 7.56 million pounds produced in 2000. This was a 28% drop from 2000. However the 2000 crop was up 26% from 1999. There were 67,000 hives in Wisconsin in 2001 which was a drop of 17,000 hives from 2000. In the year 2000 there were 84,000 hives which was an increase of 4,000 hives over 1999. Yield per hive showed a decrease of 9 pounds to 81 pounds. In 1999 yield per hive was 75 pounds and year 2000 yield had jumped to 90 pounds per hive.

Retail honey sales were good while bulk movement was reported slow.

## U. S. EXPORTS OF HONEY BY COUNTRY OF DESTINATION, QUANTITY &amp; VALUE

	JANUARY 2002		YEAR TO DATE 2002	
	QUANTITY	VALUE	QUANTITY	VALUE
	Kilograms	Dollars	Kilograms	Dollars
<b>HONEY, NATURAL, PACKAGED FOR RETAIL SALE ----- DOMESTIC MERCHANDISE</b>				
Netherlands	1,043	3,124	1,043	3,124
Germany	8,001	17,640	8,001	17,640
Saudi Arabia	9,928	18,301	9,928	18,301
Yemen	13,336	41,160	13,336	41,160
Philippines	24,986	51,152	14,986	51,152
Taiwan	4,150	6,892	4,150	6,892
Japan	1,725	3,064	1,725	3,064
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>63,169</b>	<b>141,333</b>	<b>63,169</b>	<b>141,333</b>
<b>HONEY, NATURAL, NOT ELSEWHERE INDICATED OR SPECIFIED ----- DOMESTIC MERCHANDISE</b>				
Canada	31,993	75,892	31,993	75,892
Singapore	1,270	3,606	1,270	3,606
Indonesia	18,688	48,832	18,688	48,832
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54,251</b>	<b>137,694</b>	<b>54,251</b>	<b>137,694</b>

## U. S. IMPORTS OF HONEY BY COUNTRY, QUANTITY AND VALUE

COUNTRY	JANUARY 2002			YEAR TO DATE 2002		
	QUANTITY	CUSTOMS	C.I.F.	QUANTITY	CUSTOMS	C.I.F.
	kilograms	VALUE	VALUE	kilograms	VALUE	VALUE
		dollars	dollars		dollars	dollars
<b>NATURAL HONEY, NOT PACKAGED FOR RETAIL SALE --- WHITE</b>						
Canada	969,022	1,573,508	1,583,519	969,022	1,573,508	1,583,519
Mexico	19,430	30,664	31,985	19,430	30,664	31,985
Chile	37,326	53,717	57,884	37,326	53,717	57,884
Argentina	39,765	42,598	47,417	39,765	42,598	47,417
Thailand	473,280	562,688	603,658	473,280	562,688	603,658
China, Mainland	670,480	695,445	760,597	670,480	695,445	760,597
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,209,303</b>	<b>2,958,620</b>	<b>3,085,060</b>	<b>2,209,303</b>	<b>2,958,620</b>	<b>3,085,060</b>
<b>NATURAL HONEY, NOT PACKAGED FOR RETAIL SALE --- EXTRA LIGHT AMBER</b>						
Canada	21,342	29,873	29,964	21,342	29,873	29,964
Mexico	148,794	208,392	215,109	148,794	208,392	215,109
Brazil	19,200	25,775	26,350	19,200	25,775	26,350
Uruguay	39,215	54,118	55,258	39,215	54,118	55,258
Argentina	20,152	21,590	24,032	20,152	21,590	24,032
Thailand	847,960	992,960	1,082,088	847,960	992,960	1,082,088
Vietnam	378,160	419,360	453,097	378,160	419,360	453,097
China	296,300	302,057	333,415	296,300	302,057	333,415
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,771,123</b>	<b>2,054,125</b>	<b>2,219,303</b>	<b>1,771,123</b>	<b>2,054,125</b>	<b>2,219,303</b>

**IMPORTS continued****NATURAL HONEY, NOT PACKAGED FOR RETAIL SALE --- LIGHT AMBER**

Canada	18,165	27,632	27,682	18,165	27,632	27,682
Mexico	428,337	476,520	495,332	428,337	476,520	495,332
Peru	18,000	23,599	25,399	18,000	23,599	25,399
Brazil	145,816	171,875	187,651	145,816	171,875	187,651
Uruguay	170,613	223,254	235,522	170,613	223,254	235,522
Romania	19,000	24,514	24,516	19,000	24,514	24,516
Bulgaria	20,233	26,424	26,426	20,233	26,424	26,426
Thailand	241,128	286,862	296,608	241,128	286,862	296,608
Vietnam	393,080	410,970	452,019	393,080	410,970	452,019
China	490,663	484,351	528,054	490,663	484,351	528,054
Taiwan	2,700	5,616	5,923	2,700	5,615	5,923

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,947,735</b>	<b>2,161,616</b>	<b>2,305,132</b>	<b>1,947,736</b>	<b>2,161,616</b>	<b>2,305,132</b>
--------------	------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------

**NATURAL HONEY, NOT PACKAGED FOR RETAIL SALE – NOT ELSEWHERE SPECIFIED OR INDICATED**

Canada	94,150	120,163	121,121	94,150	120,163	121,121
Mexico	64,385	84,046	90,646	64,385	84,046	90,646
Brazil	57,786	70,065	76,486	57,786	70,065	76,486
Argentina	96,428	104,440	108,976	96,428	104,440	108,976
Italy	15,000	10,690	11,690	15,000	10,690	11,690
Thailand	19,720	26,961	44,214	19,720	26,961	44,214
Taiwan	726	3,110	3,215	726	3,110	3,215

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>348,195</b>	<b>419,475</b>	<b>456,348</b>	<b>348,195</b>	<b>419,475</b>	<b>456,348</b>
--------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------